



7/19/06 BdMtg Item 5
Big River/Salmon Creek
Deadline: 7/14/06 5pm

Celebrating 30 Years of Land Conservation in Mendocino County, 1976-2006

July 14, 2006

Ms. Tam M. Doduc
Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814



SRF Loan Number C-06-6090-110/Big River and Salmon Creek Conservation Project

Dear Ms. Doduc,

On behalf of the Mendocino Land Trust, I am writing to advocate that the State Water Board approve at your July 19th meeting a State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan to The Conservation Fund to assist with the purchase of approximately 16,400 acres of forestland in the Big River and Salmon Creek watersheds in Mendocino County. The Land Trust wishes to convey its enthusiastic support for this innovative and effective use of the Revolving Fund to protect coastal forests and at the same time address important water quality and other beneficial uses on the North Coast.

This exciting project will combine SRF loan funds with grants from public agencies and private foundations to achieve important water quality protection and enhancement goals identified in a number of State plans and policies relating to water quality and other beneficial uses, including the Board's Nonpoint Source Program Strategy and Implementation Plan, 1998 - 2013, and Department of Fish and Game's Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon.

Specifically, water quality protection and enhancement objectives will be achieved by permanently protecting the properties from subdivision and conversion to non-forest uses and by implementing sustainable forest practices and silvicultural management measures identified in the Implementation Plan. Successful implementation of these measures will also achieve important state objectives related to recovery of coho salmon and steelhead trout.

The Mendocino Land Trust has an ongoing land conservation interest in the Big River watershed. In July 2002, the Land Trust acquired 7,334 acres (with the support of 1,400 contributors including the Coastal Conservancy) in the estuary portion of the Big River watershed and conveyed the property to California Department of Parks and Recreation. The proposed acquisition and its proposed management will also complement restoration

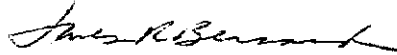
work in the estuarine portion of Big River and we look forward to working with The Conservation Fund to monitor water quality on both properties.

The coastal forests of Mendocino County provide a wide array of irreplaceable benefits for all Californians. However, the increasing pace of residential and agricultural development of forestland throughout the region presents a serious threat to the future integrity of these important coastal ecosystems and the biological, scenic, economic and recreational benefits they provide for residents and visitors alike.

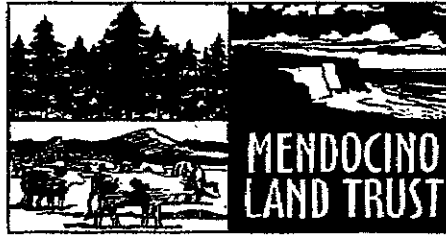
By funding the proposed Big River/Salmon Creek purchase, the Water Board can play a leading role in securing a sustainable future for the coastal forests of Mendocino County and improve water quality in a key watershed.

I urge you to seize this opportunity and approve the proposed loan for the acquisition of the Big River and Salmon Creek properties.

Sincerely,



James R. Bernard
Executive Director



MENDOCINO LAND TRUST, INC., PO BOX 1094, MENDOCINO CA 95460. TELEPHONE: 707-962-0470. FAX: 707-962-0444.

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: 7/14/06

TIME: 12:30PM

TO: SONG HER

FROM: JAMES BERNARD

TELEPHONE:

FAX: 916 341 5620

REGARDING:

PAGES, INCLUDING COVER: 3

MESSAGE:

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SRF

LOAN # C-06-6090-110/BIG RIVER
AND SALMON CREEK CONSERVATION
PROJECT

PLEASE CALL IF ALL PAGES ARE NOT RECEIVED